CLAIM PTO

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1.   (Amended)   A service provision system, for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software

modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to services[;]. and

wherein said reconfigurable agent is provided with means to select a set of software modules from said plurality of different software modules, in response to user information received at the input, and to invoke and run [the executable] said code provided by said selected set,

each software module comprising at least one process step with one or more associated rules, the behavior of the system in use being determined at least in part by the outcome of application of said one or more associated rules in the process step, and

at least one of said one or more associated rules being external to the software modules and being loaded in a relevant module when that module is run during use of the system.

2. A service provision system for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software modules which provide executable code to the agent for use in providing access to services;

wherein said reconfigurable agent is provided with means to select a set of software modules from said plurality of different software modules, in response to user information received at the input, and to invoke and run the executable code provided by said selected set; and

wherein the reconfigurable agent adopts a first configuration in response to a user initiating use of the system, by selecting an initial set of software modules, and reconfigures to a second configuration on receiving data associated with the user, by selecting a subsequent set of software modules.

3. (Amended) A service provision system according to claim 1 [wherein the reconfigurable software agent is provided with an available set of software modules and adopts a reconfiguration at least partly by selecting modules from the set to make available to run in use of the system and which] further [comprises] comprising means for changing [the available set of] said plurality of different software modules for the purpose of upgrading or modifying the service provision system.

4. A service provision system according to claim 1 wherein at least one associated rule is reusable between software modules in that it can be loaded with respect to more than one software module when the respective modules are run during use of the system.

5. A service provision system according to claim 1 wherein: a group of the software modules provide service-independent building blocks in support of services to be provided by the system.

6. A service provision system according to claim 1 wherein:

> at least one of the software modules provides adaptation of the service provision system to operating constraints and/or capabilities relevant to usage of the system by a user.

7.   (Amended)   A service provision [on] system, for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to services;

wherein said reconfigurable agent is provided with means to select a set of software modules from said plurality of different software modules, in response to user information received at the input, and to invoke and run [the executable] said code provided by said selected set; 'and]

wherein [the reconfigurable software agent comprises, or has access to, a plurality of software modules, each software module being provided with a data structure and associated functionality, at least some of the different configurations of the agent incorporating different respective sets of modules selected from said plurality,] at least one of the software modules [providing] provides adaptation of the service provision system to operating constraints and/or capabilities relevant to usage of the system by a user; and

wherein said adaptation of the service provision system is in response to real-time operating constraints and/or capabilities relevant to usage of the system by a user.

8. A service provision system according to claim 7 wherein said adaptation is in respect of language.

9. A service provision system according to claim 6 wherein said adaptation is in respect of a filter or translator of information provided by the system to the user.

10. A service provision system for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code, wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent having an input for user information and comprises, or has access to, a plurality of different software modules which provide executable code to the agent for user in providing access to services,

at least two configurations of the agent incorporating different respective sets of modules selected from said plurality,

wherein at least one of the software modules provides selection and/or modification of other software modules of said plurality between different configurations of the agent.

11.   (Amended)   A service provision system, for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to services;

wherein said reconfigurable agent is provided with means to select a set of software modules from said plurality of different software modules, in response to user information received at the input, and to invoke and run the [executable] said code provided by said selected set; [and]

wherein at least one of the [reconfigurable software agent comprises,] software modules provides selection and/or [has access to, a plurality of] modification of others of the software modules[, each software module being provided with a data structure and associated functionality, at least some of the] between different configurations of the agent [incorporating]; and

wherein at least one of said plurality of different (respective sets of modules selected from said plurality, at least one of the software modules providing selection and/or modification of other software modules of said plurality between different configurations of the agent; and wherein at least one of said plurality of) software modules provides a conflict resolution process for use in resolving conflicts between requirements of software modules of the same selected set.

12. A service provision system according to claim 10, wherein

each software module comprises at least one process step with one or more associated rules, the behaviour of the system in use being determined at least in part by the outcome of application of said one or more associated rules in the process step: and

said modification of the software modules between configurations is provided at least in part by modification or substitution of one or more associated rules of a process step.

13. A service provision system according to claim 10 wherein

each software module comprises at least one process step with one or more associated rules, the behaviour of the system in use being determined at least in part by the outcome of application of said one or more associated rules in the process step: and

said modification of the software modules between configurations is provided at least in part by addition or subtraction of one or more rules to or from the associated rules of a process step.

14.   (Amended)   A service provision system, for providing services to a user by
means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a
computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a
system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for
user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software
modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to
services[;],

wherein said reconfigurable agent is provided with means to select a set of
software modules from said plurality of different software modules, in response to user
information received at the input, and to invoke and run [the executable] said code
provided by said selected set; and

wherein [the reconfigurable software agent comprises, or has access to, a plurality
of software modules, each software module being provided with a data structure and
associated functionality, at least some of the different configurations of the agent
incorporating different respective sets of modules selected from said plurality,] at least
one software module of the plurality [providing] provides conflict resolution functionality
for use in co-ordinating presence of other software modules in a selected set.

15. A service provision system according to claim 1 wherein data input to the system in use, by a user, comprises calling entity identification data, identifying a calling entity accessing the system, and the configuration adopted by the reconfigurable software agent is determined at least in part by reference to the calling identity identification data.

16. (Amended) A service provision system, for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to services;

at least some of the different configurations of the agent incorporating different respective sets of modules selected from said plurality,

wherein data input to the system in use, by a user, excludes calling entity identification data, identifying a calling entity accessing the system, and the configuration adopted by the reconfigurable software agent determines that the functionality of the

system includes means for providing cost data to the calling entity in advance of service

provision by means of the system.

17.   (Amended)   A service provision system, for providing services to a user by

means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a

computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a

system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for

user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software

modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to

services[;],

at least some of the different configurations of the agent incorporating different

respective sets of modules selected from said plurality, and

wherein the configuration adopted by the reconfigurable software agent determines

that the functionality of the system includes means for accepting payment data from the

calling entity in advance of service provision by means of the system.

18. A service provision system according to claim 1
wherein the system comprises at least two reconfigurable
intelligent software agents, each reconfigurable agent being
associated with a respective user of the system.

19. A service provision system according to claim 1
wherein the intelligent software agents are constructed
according to object-oriented technology.

20. A service provision system according to claim 1
wherein services made available by use of the system are
information services.

21.   (Amended)   A service provision system, for providing services to a user by means of one or more communications network(s),

wherein the service provision system comprises intelligent software agents in a computing environment, which agents co-operate to provide access to services for a system user by invoking and running executable code, or code to be interpreted,

wherein at least one agent is a reconfigurable agent and comprises an input for user information, and further comprises or has access to a plurality of different software modules which provide [executable] said code to the agent for use in providing access to services[;],

wherein said reconfigurable agent is provided with means to select a set of software modules from said plurality of different software modules, in response to user information received at the input, and to invoke and run the [executable] said code provided by said selected set; and

wherein the reconfigurable agent has a plurality of different configurations available to it, and can reconfigure to make transitions between configurations of said plurality, during use of the system, direct transitions between predetermined pairs of the configurations being unavailable.